

'I'd love to corner the market in monster mother

Former Avengers girl Diana gets on the wrong side of the law ...with lethal results

DIANA RIGG's latest television role will never earn her the title of Mother Of The Year.

She's an absolute monster in *Mother Love*, a drama airing on the ABC on July 11 and 12.

The former Avengers girl — she was the leather-clad Emma Peel — teams with David McCallum and James Wilby in one of TV's nastiest tales, adapted from the Dominic Taylor novel.

Diana plays Helena Vesey, whose love for her son Kit (Wilby) is so obsessive that it almost destroys everyone around her.

Helena will stop at nothing to keep control of Kit, even murder, and proves most adroit at preparing cookies — laced with poison and covered with enticing layers of marzipan — for her grandchildren.

Having lunch with Diana Rigg there is, happily, no sign of marzipan on the menu.

"I'm constantly ribbed about the marzipan these days," she says.

The mother of 14-year-old Rachel, Diana says that Helena Vesey is one of those gem roles every actor attacks with relish.

"I just went all the way with her, but at the same time I had to be careful not to go right over the top," she says.

Diana would love to get another role like Helena Vesey, for which she won a British television award. "In fact, I'd love to corner the market in monster mother roles," she says with a laugh.

● Way back when . . . Diana Rigg, as the leather-loving Emma Peel, with her Avengers co-star, the suave Patrick Macnee.



"Although I've played a lot of heavy ladies in my career — including Lady Macbeth and Phaedra, for instance — I'd not really played a modern heavy type. That's why I agreed to play Helena — it was a wonderful part and it opened new fields for me."

What did her own daughter think of her role of the smothering mother? Was she taken aback?

"I don't think Rachel wanted to see it all," Diana says. "She didn't like seeing me doing what I was doing, and I can understand that."

"Normally she sees everything and loves it, like all good